DEVELOPMENT OF A MODEL FOR TOURISM FOR THE STATE OF KERALA

Introduction

The economic significance of tourism in terms of employment generation, income generation, foreign exchange earnings and regional development etc are the major driving force that enables national governments to place tourism appropriately in the development agenda. Among the different states in India, Kerala is a well-known destination for domestic as well as foreign tourists. The intervention of Kerala Government in the key areas of development has transformed the industry from barely 50,000 foreign tourist arrivals in 1986, to a status of over 9 million domestic and over 0.7 million foreign tourists in 2012. The tourism industry in broader terms has great indirect multiplier impact in the economy through backward and forward linkages. The economic review report (2013) shows that the total revenue (including direct & indirect means) from tourism during 2012-13 was ` 20430 Crores, showing an increase of 7.31per cent over the previous year's figure. Thus tourism has become a very important economic activity of Kerala. This development of tourism industry has got great positive and negative impacts in terms of environmental, cultural, social and economic development, which can no longer be ignored. The increase in tourism activity at a destination creates pressures on the quality of life of the destination community. These were the result of unplanned developments in tourism industry and sustainable development was evolved as a measure to mitigate these negative impacts. The present study is intended to suggest a model for Kerala tourism which will ensure sustainable development.

Need and Significance of the Study

The rapid expansion of tourism in the 20th century has led to many changes in the structure of society. The positive outcomes were that it increases the employment opportunities (Dyer et al., 2007, Untong et al., 2010, Nunkoo et al. 2011, Nunkoo et al.2012), improves the local economy (Dogan et al., 2004), provides revenue for the local government (Dogan et al., 2004, Dyer et al., 2007), raises the standard of living of the resident community (Ko et al., 2002, Nunkoo et al., 2011). The negative outcomes were that tourism increases the cost of living, increases the crime rate, creates congestion problems, causes different types of pollutions, increases real estate cost, causes increase of alcoholism

and prostitution and it also results in the increase of prices of goods and services (Ko et al., 2002, 2004, Dyer et al., 2007, Látková et al., 2012). In fact, these impacts were the result of unplanned developments approaches. According to Murphy (1985), development and planning approaches to tourism were entirely myopic and as result of these ad hoc planning processes, the negative impacts of industry became severe. This has become a threat in the long run for the industry and sustainable development approaches were evolved as remedy to this problem. The importance of sustainable development has been extensively deliberated in tourism sectors because such development can meet the needs of the present day tourists, provide opportunities to enhance economic growth, protect the physical resources of tourism, and improve the quality of life of residents while enhancing opportunities for the future through the coexistence of tourism development and environmental quality (Eagles, McCool, & Haynes, 2002). These sustainable approaches have to be planned by taking attention to all the stakeholders of tourism industry. The important stakeholders of tourism development are the tourist, tourism industry, resident community and the government and its agencies (Peter E and Ann E (2006). Among the four stakeholders, local community is the main factor which influence the tourist satisfaction, as the tourists are coming to experience the different way of life of people, their culture etc (Aref, Gill and Aref, 2010). The cultural difference between the people are the main attracting factor which make a place different from each other and the resident community is the main contributor to this difference. Thus among these four stakeholders, the resident community is an important one which contributes to tourist satisfaction. Tourism academicians seem to have achieved an agreement on the view that community-based tourism development is the best tool for ensuring sustainable development of the destination (Sebele, 2010; Taylor, 1995). The effective participation of resident community in tourism development can only be ensured by the government. The active support of resident's population determines the success and the sustainability of any tourism development. It is important for the government to consider information about the impacts of tourism from the local community's perspective while planning for the industry. Another important stakeholder of tourism is the tourists which determine the future of tourism industry. In order to attract more tourists it is necessary to provide them services as per their expectations. Thus understanding the expectation of tourists and their satisfaction with the facilities available at the destination is important while planning for the sustainability of the destination. As the main aim of the study was to develop a model for tourism for the state of Kerala, the study tries to explain the role of different stakeholders of

tourism and finally to suggest a model. A model explains the specified set of dependent relationships that can be tested empirically and the purpose of the model is to concisely provide a comprehensive representation of the relationships to be tested. Thus the model contains multiple relationships and this has to be empirically tested. The tourism industry includes mainly four stakeholders and it is not possible to test a model using data collected from four different samples. So it was decided to find out the most important stakeholder among the four based on pilot study conducted and research reviews. There by the resident community was found to play a decisive role in the sustainable development of tourism at a destination. The initiative of Kerala government also supports this view. So the study was indented to develop a model in resident's perspective and its relation to the stakeholders like the role of government, the impacts of the tourism industry etc. As tourist is the main actor of the industry, the study also tries to find out the satisfaction of tourist with the tourism industry in Kerala. Thus the study covers the areas of tourist satisfaction, the resident community support, the role of government and the impacts of tourism industry in resident's perspective. Thus the study finally suggests a model for Kerala tourism which ensures sustainability.

Objectives of the study

1. To assess the foreign and domestic tourist expectation and satisfaction levels in relation to Kerala as a tourist destination.
2. To understand whether there is any significant relation between demographic variables of the tourists (domestic and foreign) and their satisfaction on different destination attributes.
3. To understand the important variables which determine the resident community support for tourism development.
4. To understand the effect of these different variables on resident community support for tourism development.
5. To develop a model for resident community support for the state of Kerala which could lead to sustainable development.

Hypotheses

1. There exists significant difference between the expectation and experience of the tourist (domestic and foreign) on different destination attributes of Kerala.

2. There exists significant relationship between the demographic variables of the tourists (domestic and foreign) and satisfaction of domestic tourist on different destination attributes.
3. There is a direct negative relationship between Perceived Role of Government and Perceived Cost of Tourism.
4. There is a direct positive relationship between Perceived Role of Government and Perceived Benefits of Tourism.
5. There is a direct positive relationship between Perceived Role of Government and Overall Community Satisfaction.
6. There is a direct positive relationship between Perceived Benefits of Tourism and Community Support.
7. There is a direct positive relationship between Community Satisfaction and Community Support.
8. There is a direct negative relationship between Perceived Cost of Tourism and Community Support.
9. There is a direct negative relationship between Perceived Cost of Tourism and Overall Community Satisfaction.
10. There is a direct positive relationship between Perceived Benefits of Tourism and Overall Community Satisfaction.
11. There is an indirect effect of Perceived Role of Government and Community Support.

Methodology

The research design used for the study includes exploratory research design which is conducted at the initial part of research, to design the questionnaire, sample, data collection strategy etc., and then descriptive research was conducted to describe the population and the final part of the study uses the causal research to find out the causal relationship among the variables. The study uses both primary and secondary data. The secondary data was collected from journals, thesis, reports, newspaper articles etc. The primary data was collected from two samples. For the first sample data was collected from resident community at the destinations. The population for the second sample consists of all the tourists (both domestic and foreign) visiting the destinations in Kerala at the point of study. Multistage sampling method was adopted for drawing sample units. A total of 8 destinations were selected and the selected

destinations were Thiruvananthapuram city, Kovalam, Alappuzha, Kumarakom, Munnar, Thekkady, Fortkochi and Kochi city. The analysis was done using SPSS (ver21), AMOS and excel spreadsheet. The different analysis used in the study includes factor analysis, Anova, t-test, post-hoc test, paired sample t-test and structural equation modeling.

Major Findings of the Study

The findings of the study was divided into three sections, first one is the findings of the analysis of domestic tourists questionnaire. Second section explains the findings of the analysis of foreign tourists' questionnaire and the third section describes the findings of the analysis of resident community questionnaire.

Analysis of data from domestic tourists

1. The larger portions of the domestic tourists were from Tamil Nadu (20%), followed by Andra Pradesh (18%), Karnataka (17.5%), Kerala (11.5%) and the rest were from Mumbai, Delhi, Orissa and UP.
2. The study has utilized the HOLSAT model to measure the satisfaction and expectation of tourists visited in selected destinations in Kerala. The result of the study shows that the domestic tourists are dissatisfied with 12 positive destination attributes out of the 24 positive attributes of Kerala. The study shows that the atmosphere at the beaches in Kerala, the recreational activities in Kerala etc are not performing as per the expectation of domestic tourists, resulting in dissatisfaction. Also tourists don't view Kerala as an inexpensive destination and they are dissatisfied with the quality of food, price charged for food and beverages by the restaurants. They are of the opinion that the accommodation units are not providing services worth the money paid and they are dissatisfied with the conditions of roads in Kerala. The study shows that the services of travel agencies, the services of public transportation systems etc are to be improved to meet the expectation of domestic tourists. They are satisfied with the balance twelve attributes which includes the attractions in Kerala, the ayurvedic treatments, the information facilities provided to tourists, the safety at the accommodation units, the variety of local foods available, the hospitality of various service providers etc.
3. The result also show that 3 negative attributes scored better than expected and 7 scored badly than expected. The analysis on negative attribute shows that the experiences of

domestic tourists on seven attributes are worse than that of expected and they are dissatisfied with these attributes. They are of the view that the destinations in Kerala are overcrowded and opined that the beggars and street vendors are very commonly seen in the tourist destinations in Kerala. They are dissatisfied because most of the destinations in Kerala lack public toilet facilities and are polluted. They are of the opinion that they are facing communication problem at the destinations. They are also dissatisfied because the cleanliness and hygiene conditions of the accommodation units in Kerala are poor. Out of the ten negative attributes for three negative attributes, the difference between expectation and experience shows a negative difference, which indicates that respondents had highest levels of satisfaction with these negative attributes, suggesting that the tourists did not have to pay as much concern to these attributes as they had expected.

4. The result also shows that the demographic variables of the domestic tourists have got significance in determining the tourist's satisfaction on different destination attributes.

Analysis of data from foreign tourists

1. The larger portions of the foreign tourists were from U.K(27.5%),U.S.A(16%), Germany(12.5%),France(11.5%) and the rest were from Australia, Canada, Italy, U.A.E, Malaysia etc

2. The result of the study shows that the foreign tourists are dissatisfied with 11 positive attributes out of the 24 positive attributes. The study shows that the services of guides, services of public transportation systems etc are to be improved to meet the expectation of foreign tourists. The tourists are also dissatisfied with the atmosphere at the beaches in Kerala, the recreational facilities in Kerala, the behaviour of hotel staffs, the quality of foods offered in restaurants in Kerala and also with the safety and security at the accommodation units in Kerala. They are also not satisfied with accessibility of the destinations in Kerala and also they don't perceive Kerala as an inexpensive destination. But they are satisfied with the attributes like 'the local foods and drinks of Kerala',' Internet and telephone connectivity in Kerala', 'the natural attractions in Kerala', 'the Ayurvedic treatments of Kerala', 'the attitude of various service providers' etc.

3. The result also show that for 7 out of the 12 negative attributes the difference between ''experience'' and ''expectation'' is significant. The result shows that the performance of 5

negative attributes scored better than expected and 7 scored bad than expected. The foreign tourists opinioned that the destinations in Kerala are overcrowded and the beggars and street vendors are very commonly seen in the tourist destinations in Kerala. They are dissatisfied because most of the destinations in Kerala lack public toilet facilities and are polluted. They also opined that they are facing communication problem at the destinations. They are dissatisfied with the traffic congestions during travel by roads in Kerala and are also dissatisfied with the overall cleanliness and hygiene conditions in Kerala. For 5 negative attributes the difference between experience and expectation is negative and it shows that the tourists did not have to pay as much concern to these attributes as they had expected. The tourists have not to concern about the changing of foreign currency while travelling in Kerala, about the ATM facilities, about the Immigration and Customs clearance procedure in the airports in Kerala etc.

4. The result also shows that the demographic variables of the domestic tourists have got significance in determining the tourist's satisfaction on different destination attributes.

Analysis of data from resident community

1. Out of the total 800 responses four hundred twenty four (53%) respondents were female while the rest were male (47%). The majority of the sample were belongs to the age group 30-40(24%) followed by 40-50(22.4%), 20-30(21.1%) and so on. The sample was dominated by those who studied up to graduate level (33%), followed by respondents studied up to 12^{th}(26.9%), 10-12^{th} level(25.5%), post graduate(12%) etc. 57.5% of the respondents were married and 49.1% were native of the destination where they are staying. 51.3% were not employed in tourism sector and rest were(48.8%) employed in tourism related job. 22% of the respondents get a lot of money from the tourism sector, followed by 15.6% were get some income and 45.8% get none income from tourism sector.
2. From the literature review the important variables which affect the resident community support were identified. Thus the present study identifies 'Perceived Costs of Tourism', 'Perceived Benefits of Tourism', 'Perceived role of Government', and 'Overall Community Satisfaction' are the important variables which affects 'Support for tourism development'.
3. The factor analysis on the perceived benefits of tourism gives two factors namely the 'Economic and cultural benefits' and the' Welfare benefits'. The first factor discusses the

economic benefits that the community gets by the way of providing more employment opportunities, by attracting more investments into the community, creating additional tax revenues from tourists for the local government and thus helps to increase the standard of living of the community etc. The items also states about the cultural benefits that the community gets from tourism development. So the factor one is named as 'Economic and cultural benefits'. The factor two discusses the different facilities that the community gets from tourism development and the factor two is named as' Welfare benefits'

4. The factor analysis on 'perceived cost of tourism, 'resulted in three factors viz 'Socio-Economic cost', 'Socio-cultural cost', 'Socio-environment cost'. The factor one is explaining the economic and social cost of tourism. So the factor one is named as 'Socio-Economic cost'. The factor two is measuring the social and cultural impacts of tourism and it is named as 'Socio-cultural cost'. The factor three is measuring the social and environmental cost of tourism and thus it is named as 'Socio-environment cost'.

5. The factor analysis on 'perceived role of government' resulted in three factors and they are 'Community Developer', 'Community Participation' and 'Controller of tourism cost'. The first factor discusses how the different steps taken by the government has helped the resident community to develop further. So the factor one is named as 'Community Developer'. The factor two discuss the role of government to ensure the community participation in tourism development and thus it is named as 'Community Participation'. The factor three includes items measuring the different role of government to reduce the different forms of pollution, to check the overexploitation of natural resources, to control the social problems associated with tourism like alcoholism, crime, prostitution, child abuse etc. Thus factor three discusses the role of the government to control the different cost of tourism development and thus it is named as 'Controller of tourism cost'. The factor analysis on overall community satisfaction resulted in two factors namely 'Socio-environment status' and 'Tourism Development Process'. The items under factor are measuring the satisfaction of the community members on the social and environmental status of the area and thus the factor one is named as 'Socio-environment status'. The factor two includes items which measures the satisfaction of community members with the quality of life in the region, with the facilities which they are getting in the region because of tourism development etc. So the factor two measures the community

satisfaction on different aspects as a result of tourism development and thus the factor two is named as ‘Tourism Development Process’.

6. Out of the nine hypotheses which explain the relationship between the various dimensions of tourism namely, Perceived role of government, Perceived costs of Tourism, Perceived benefits of Tourism, Overall community satisfaction and community Support of development of Tourism, seven were accepted and two were rejected. The rejected hypotheses were the hypothesis number H7 and H9.

7. The study suggests a model for Kerala tourism which ensures sustainable development. The resident community and the government are the major factors which ensure the sustainable development of tourism at a destination. The model developed explains the different role of government through which the community support for tourism can be achieved. The model also explains the relationship between the government and community and this relationship is mediated by the impacts of tourism (both benefits and costs) and the overall community satisfaction with the present tourism development. The success of tourism development depends on community support which can be enhanced by ensuring maximum benefits to residents from tourism industry and by mitigating the costs of tourism. The maximization of benefits of tourism and minimization of tourism costs can be achieved by the government. The model explains the three different roles of government(‘Community Developer’, ‘Community Participation’ and ‘Controller of tourism cost’) through which this can be achieved. Thus the study suggests that the Perceived Benefits of tourism and Perceived role of government strongly affects the community support. The model developed is presented in fig.1

Discussion and Suggestions

1. As tourist is the main actor in tourism industry, understanding their satisfaction is important for the industry to survive long run. The contribution of the study is that using HOLSAT, the study measures the expectation of tourists on the important travel attributes which are particular to Kerala. The main contribution of the study is that the study lists out both positive and negative destination attributes of Kerala and clearly measures the tourist’s satisfaction on these attributes. So in order to provide them better services as per their

expectations, the survey like this has to be conducted in every year to know about the areas which are lagging behind. The study proves that the HOLSAT is useful tool for measuring tourist satisfaction with destinations and lists out the important destination attributes.

2. The main contribution of the study is the suggestion of a model for tourism for Kerala. As tourism development is possible by the integration of important stakeholders of tourism, the study throws light to the areas like tourist satisfaction, the role of government, the importance of community support for tourism development, the factors which determine the community support for tourism development and the different impacts of tourism industry. As the resident community at the destination is the important stakeholder among others which can ensure sustainable development, the study explains the important variables which determines the community support for tourism development in the state of Kerala and also explains the relationship between the variables.

3. The study suggests that for ensuring sustainable development, the Kerala government has to adopt community support tourism models. The study also suggests the government's role in building community support for tourism development is pivotal and the different impacts of tourism industry (both benefits and costs) and their overall satisfaction with the tourism industry etc are the mediating factors which influence the relationship between government and community. Thus the study suggests a model for tourism by explaining the areas like role of government, the resident community support, the perception of residents on different tourism impacts, the community overall satisfaction with the present tourism development etc. The study suggests that the Perceived Benefits of tourism and Perceived role of government strongly affects the community support.

Limitations of the Study

1. Since the study was intended to measure the tourist expectation and experience on different travel attributes, the expectation has to be measured before visiting the destinations and experience after the completion of travel. But because of the difficulty of maintaining contact with respondents before and after travel, the tourist questionnaire was administered only once and this can be taken as one of the limitation of the study.
2. Language seems to be one of the limitations while collecting data from the tourists, as tourists were coming from different countries and from different states in India who were

not equally proficient in English.

3. The result of the study is limited to the information provided by the respondents as there was no mechanism to check whether the information is correct or not.

Structural Equation Model for Tourism for the state of Kerala with Community support and the role of Government

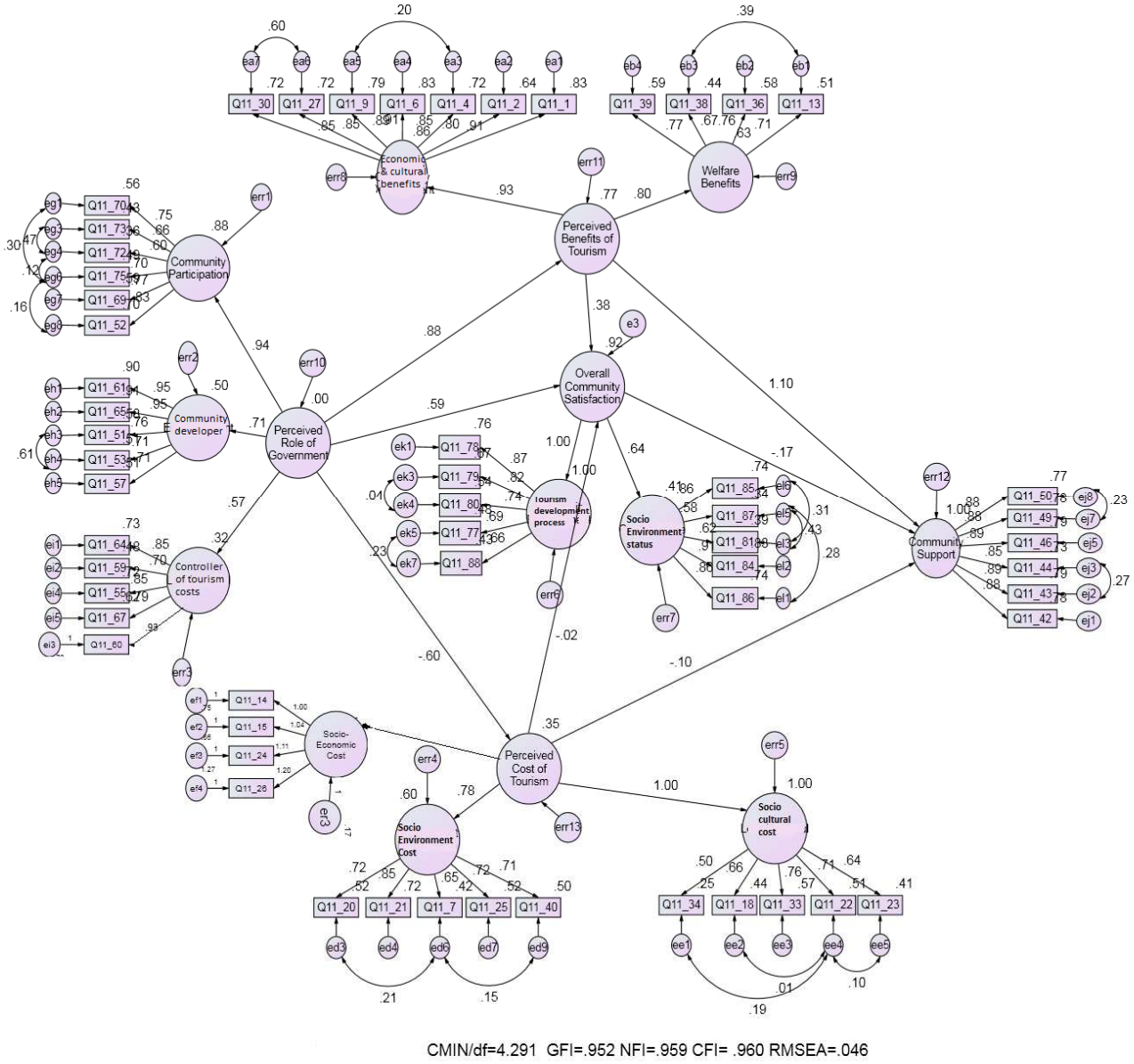

Fig:1 model developed